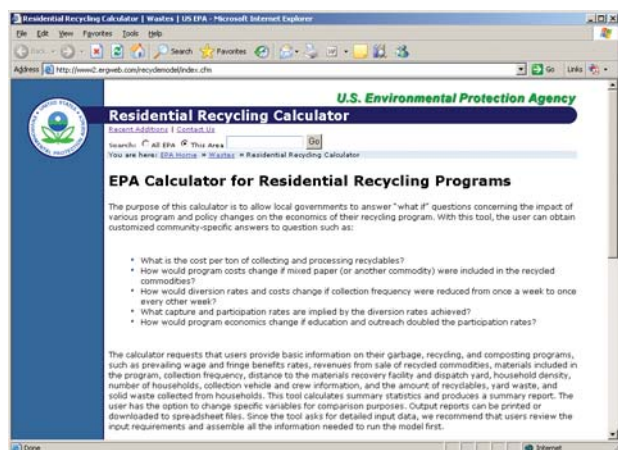




# Evaluating Residential Recycling Program Changes

With tightening program budgets, municipal recycling program managers face the challenge of maintaining or even expanding programs with fewer resources. To help local governments analyze their current recycling program costs and test the effect of changing some aspects of the program on the overall program bottom line, EPA developed the Residential Recycling Program Calculator. The calculator will help answer “what if” questions such as:

- What is the cost per ton of collecting and processing recyclables in your community?
- How would program costs change by adjusting collection frequency or collecting a new commodity?
- Would your recycling program be more cost effective if program participation increased?



The Residential Recycling Program Calculator asks for basic information about the community and its current garbage and recycling programs. After entering community-specific data and running the calculator, users get summary statistics about their current programs. By adjusting one or more of the variables and re-running the calculator, program managers can see how program costs and other factors change. This tool allows users to test different scenarios and offers side-by-side comparisons of results. Cost changes associated with garbage versus recycling, as well as total net costs, are estimated.

To learn how the calculator can help you with your program planning, visit EPA's Tools for Local Governments Web site at [epa.gov/epawaste/conserve/tools/localgov](http://epa.gov/epawaste/conserve/tools/localgov). Explore additional resources, such as advice for improving recycling program economics by fine-tuning recycling collection and processing contracts; success stories; and ready-to-go outreach materials. The Residential Recycling Program Calculator and the entire Tools for Local Governments Web site will help municipalities recognize and adapt to the difficult landscape recycling programs operate in today.



September 2008  
EPA530-F-08-016